

December 6, 2008

Dear Fellow Educators,

I had the privilege of having No Holds Bard teach and perform at my elementary school January, 2007. The Specials teachers in my building (P.E., Library, Art, Music and Assets) designed a school wide Shakespeare Festival and the No Holds Bard troupe introduced my 4th and 5th graders to Shakespeare like I've never seen before. Even though I had enjoyed performances by this company in their summer series, it was another thing entirely to see three members of this talented troupe hold captive over 250 young students as they were treated to background, history, acting, audience participation and much more in this one hour event. It was the perfect kickoff to our in depth, five month study of William Shakespeare.

This talented trio showed us scenes from *Henry V*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *As You Like It* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. They invited several students to participate in a scene from *Much Ado About Nothing* and engaged everyone in a variety of ways throughout their program. I had the pleasure of watching my kids watch the actors, and my students, without a doubt, every single one of them, were completely enthralled.

Often when we have guest artists and/or speakers, the behavior of my students can be disappointing, partly due to the fact that the speakers or guests are not accustomed to holding the attention of such young students. I had wondered if a program of this length about William Shakespeare could possibly be a disaster. Quite the opposite, it was by far one of the best events we have ever hosted at Creekside. I had more boys than I had anticipated completely excited about being a part of our performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, after seeing this creative group of actors and educators. My kids were inspired and perhaps more importantly, several months after this assembly, I found that the retention of the material learned was beyond my highest expectations.

I highly recommend No Holds Bard and would have them back repeatedly if I could. They are entertainers, which I knew, but they are educators of the highest caliber and they inspire and encourage and support kids on the learning and understanding of this powerful playwright, by making his works accessible to all.

There is no doubt that the learning that took place last January has a shelf life of many decades by kids and staff alike. Please contact me for details or to answer questions. You will not be disappointed if you choose to have No Holds Bard come to your school as coaches, teachers, performers, or any other task. They are versatile and able to tailor their offering to fit your needs, as they did for us at Creekside.

Sincerely,

Mary J. Pratt
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